

**MINUTES OF
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY-EAST
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON JANUARY 6, 2011**

PRESENT: Louis Wittie, Chair
David Barnes, Committee Member
Timothy Doody, Committee Member
George Losonsky, Commissioner

The Operations Committee of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East (SLFPA-E or Authority) met on January 6, 2011 in the Second Floor Hall of the Lake Vista Community Center, 6500 Spanish Fort Blvd., New Orleans, LA. Mr. Wittie called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Opening Comments: None.

Adoption of Agenda: The Agenda was amended to delete Agenda Item B under New Business and adopted by a unanimous roll call vote.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the November 4, 2010 Operations Committee meeting were approved.

Public Comments: None.

New Business:

A. Discussion of disposition of existing Bayou Dupre Control Structure.

Stuart Williamson, Lake Borgne Basin Levee District (LBBLD) Executive Director, explained that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is constructing a new control structure at Bayou Dupre (LPB 144). Therefore, a decision will be required concerning the disposition of the old Bayou Dupre Control Structure after the new control structure is completed and fully functional. The LBBLD contacted the Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration (OCPR) to find out whether OCPR had any interest in leaving the old structure in place from an ecosystem restoration standpoint. OCPR responded that it did not see a need for use of the old structure in any type of future diversion or any other plan in the basin. Mr. Williamson advised that the USACE has a formal process for decommissioning old structures. The current control structure is aging and will require major rehabilitation. The LBBLD's position is that the old structure should be decommissioned in order to relieve the district from further operations and maintenance (O&M) responsibilities for it. He pointed out that if the old structure is decommissioned, some of the equipment could be removed for reuse. The current USACE contract for the new structure does not address the disposition of the old structure.

Jerry Colletti with the Operations Division of the USACE advised that the USACE Project Manager informed him that the USACE plans to proceed with the de-

authorization of the project. Approval is required from Congress to de-authorize a federal project. The levee district would be responsible for the O&M of the structure until it is de-authorized. The USACE had waived the requirement to de-water the old structure to determine whether any major repairs are required because the new structure is under construction.

Mr. Doody commented that the justification for de-authorizing the old Bayou Dupre Control Structure is because it is being replaced and will become redundant. He pointed out, however, that there are other structures that will be behind the 100-year frontal protection that the Authority may not want de-authorized. As an example, it was brought out that the Bayou Bienvenue Control Structure would no longer be a part of the perimeter protection; however, the structure would still need to be operated.

Mr. Turner questioned the need to de-authorize or de-commission a structure that is being replaced because it is inadequate to meet current standards. He cited several examples where existing structures will be removed as part of the USACE project after the replacement structures are constructed. He stated that the Authority would prefer that the old Bayou Dupre Control Structure be removed as part of the USACE project for the new structure and noted that the removal of the structure was in the original USACE Project plans for the new replacement structure. Should the old structure be decommissioned at some point in the future, the LLBLD may be required to pay the cost for its removal. He pointed out that some of the systems and mechanical equipment could be removed from the old Bayou Dupre Control Structure and stored by the Orleans Levee District for future repairs to the Bayou Bienvenue Control Structure.

Mr. Doody requested that the USACE Project Manager or his representative attend the next Operations Committee meeting and provide the status of this issue.

B. Extension of expiration date of contract for O.L.D. safe house build out.

Gerry Gillen, O.L.D. Executive Director, advised that the contract for architectural services, which includes construction administration, for the build out of the Orleans Levee District (O.L.D.) safe house expired on December 31, 2010. He requested that the contract be extended for a period of six months. No additional fees are involved in the requested time extension. Construction is expected to be completed in two months. One of the delays was due to a delay of about four months in obtaining the required structural bar joists. Liquidated damages will be assessed against the construction contractor; however, claims may also be filed by the contractor.

The Committee recommended that a resolution be forwarded to the Board for approval of the time extension of the architectural consulting contract.

LEVEE DISTRICT REPORTS:

East Jefferson Levee District: Jonell Blowers with the East Jefferson Levee District (EJLD) reviewed the highlights of the monthly status report (copy appended).

Mr. Turner advised that the SLFPA-E has reached a compromise with the USACE in connection with the issue of the USACE turning over projects to the levee districts before the proper turf has been established. He explained that the USACE had wanted to send a notice of completed construction on all projects immediately upon completion of the embankment work and the establishment of rye grass. Upon notice of completed construction, the grass maintenance becomes the responsibility of the levee district. The SLFPA-E informed the USACE that it did not want the levee districts to take over projects until after the proper grass cover is established, particularly since the USACE will be relying on Bermuda or a mixture of Bermuda/Bahia grass to provide the armoring requirement on the back side of the levee. A compromise was reached wherein the levee district will assist the USACE during the winter months by cutting the grass on those sections of levee not completed from a turf perspective. As soon as the growing season commences in the spring, the USACE and its contractor will resume the maintenance activities and establish the proper turf requirements. The projects would not be turned over to the levee districts until a final inspection for the turf is completed and all requirements have been met.

Mr. Turner pointed out that there could be other issues that come up during final inspections that the Authority/levee districts may deem important and should be corrected; however, the USACE may not agree. In order to protect the levee districts, he stated that he proposed that the USACE Operations Division or other appropriate USACE staff participate in the final inspections and conduct an inspection using the levee inspection tool. The areas of disagreement could then be properly documented. This information could be uploaded to the National Levee Database for future information and to use as a baseline for comparison. Mr. Colletti commented that his understanding was that the USACE will be conducting the first periodic inspection at the time of construction just prior to turning over the project.

Orleans Levee District: Gerry Gillen reviewed the highlights of the monthly status report (copy appended).

The Committee discussed quality control. Mr. Turner explained that four inspectors have been provided by OCPR and report directly to the SLFPA-E. The SLFPA-E forwards problems or issues that it discovers up the USACE's chain of command. Mr. Colletti encouraged that problems be documented and communicated to the Hurricane Protection Office (HPO) or Protection Restoration Office (PRO). Mr. Turner advised that the SLFPA-E's inspectors file daily reports and weekly summary reports, which are provided to the appropriate people in the HPO and PRO. In addition, a running list of suspense items that have not been addressed is maintained. The SLFPA-E's issues are brought up at the Hot Topics meetings conducted by the USACE. He pointed out that the SLFPA-E has no decision making authority and can only document and communicate problems and issues to the USACE. The USACE encourages that issues be solved at the lowest possible level. Information from the Hot Topics meetings is reported to Colonel Fleming by his representatives.

Lake Borgne Basin Levee District: Stuart Williamson reviewed the highlights of the monthly status report (copy appended).

Mr. Williamson informed the Committee that the LBBLD reminded the USACE at a meeting yesterday that the levee district had requested total removal and replacement of the existing Creedmore structure (LPV 148.02). Mr. Turner explained that the USACE's original plans included the construction of a cofferdam and removal of the existing structure (two 72" corrugated metal pipes). The removal of the structure was eliminated by the USACE due to a scheduling problem. The SLFPA-E/LBBLD objected to the elimination of the removal of the old structure. He described the problem that resulted after the USACE's contractor drove sheetpile through culverts. The USACE advised at its meeting yesterday that it now plans to fill the culverts with flowable fill and use a method of injection grouting to address the problems of voids in the levee.

It was noted that nineteen crane crews are working on LPV 148.02 in an effort to meet the June 1st deadline. The USACE and its contractor are attempting to address the Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Control (QC) for this increase in workforce.

Mr. Doody addressed the USACE's target date of June 1, 2011 for the 100-year level of protection. He explained that although certain projects in the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) will not be completed by June 1, 2011, the USACE is working towards achieving the 100-year level of protection by that date (HYLA – Hundred Year Level Achieved). He cited the example of Seabrook where the USACE will have the cofferdam in place providing 100-year protection; however, the Seabrook Control Structure Gate will not be completed by June 1, 2011. Mr. Doody stated that he and Bob Turner have been discussing independently and with Colonel Fleming the progression from the 100-year level to final completion of all of the HSDRRS projects. He pointed out an additional concern is the cost of overtime resulting from the attempt to complete projects by June 1, 2011 for which the local sponsor will potentially be asked to pay a 35 percent share. He stated that the SLFPA-E will have to come to an agreement with the USACE on how the projects will be completed. He advised that Colonel Fleming has agreed to provide a presentation on this issue to the Board in February or March. He noted that the SLFPA-E wants the best long term solution and not necessarily the quickest solution. Mr. Turner added that it may be possible to determine ways to provide interim 100-year protection for one year instead of accelerating every project and in doing so increasing the potential for QA/QC problems and making decisions that may not be beneficial to the levee districts from an operations and maintenance standpoint. The SLFPA-E would prefer that projects proceed at a normal pace and obtain the quality and features that are required. The SLFPA-E has begun the process of working with the USACE on the potential of putting interim protection in place in certain areas by June 1, 2011 in order to have a defense against a 100-year event. A meeting was conducted by Colonel Fleming that included contractors, project managers, non-federal sponsors and other individuals to discuss this issue and to begin making plans to go forward. Colonel Fleming has also established weekly working meetings on the PRO issues and has encouraged the participation of the SLFPA-E in these meetings.

There was no further business; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.